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BOOK REVIEWS

Our City Schools: Their Direction and Management. By WILLIAM ESTABROOK CHANCELLOR. Boston: D. C. Heath & Co., 1908. Pp. xvi+338. \$1.25.

With this volume Superintendent Chancellor has placed to his credit nearly one-half the total number of American books treating comprehensively the subject of public-school administration and supervision. His former book, *Our Schools, Their Administration and Supervision* (1904), treated of the smaller school systems, those in communities of from five to fifty thousand; the present book deals with the systems of the larger cities.

The body of the book consists of ten chapters and an appendix. The ten chapters bear the following headings, which are somewhat suggestive of the scope and the contents of the book: "The State and the School;" "The City School System;" "The Business Officers of the City System;" "The City School;" "Equipment;" "The Pupil;" "Special Schools;" "Programmes and Records;" "Aids and Accessories;" "Converting the Occupation into a Profession."

Most of the appendix, which fills two-fifths of the book, is taken up with forms, nearly one hundred of them, selected from those in actual use in several of the larger cities—most of them originating in New York. Here we have forms for billheads, for reporting change of teacher's name, for principal's report on band music, for poster notice of school-registration days, and for literary-club programme at evening recreation centers, as well as a form of building contract, of medical report on defective pupils, of monthly report of attendance officer, and of examination record of candidate for certificate. Much of this material is no better than padding, although probably not inserted for this purpose.

It is impossible, in brief space, to present an abstract of ten chapters; the matter does not lend itself readily to such treatment. It can only be described. Every chapter is crowded full of facts, observations, opinions, suggestions, bits of experience, not a little philosophy, and some metaphysics. It would require careful reading and no little experience with schools and school administration always to determine in which one of these categories many of the statements should be placed. For this reason, and others, the book is better suited to "experienced city-school administrators" than to "students of education," the author to the contrary notwithstanding.

High ideals, deep insights, extensive visions, a keen sense of the far-reaching significance of even apparently trivial details, characterize every chapter. The universal school, in its many forms, is to be the salvation of democratic civilization. Quoting Lotze, the author holds that "the mechanism is of universal significance and conditions the success of the activities of the spirit." And he does not overemphasize, but points out the importance of system, when he says: "I am obliged to hold that a correct school system is absolutely essential to good schools within the system. In the poor school

system, the good school is an accident, and is always in peril of destruction. In the good school system, the poor school is an anomaly and is certainly in process of reform and of improvement" (p. vi).

It would be hard to find a more sympathetic and adequate brief characterization of the child and the child-world than this, opening the chapter on "The Pupil:"

"The world of the child consists of his playmates—brothers, sisters, cousins, neighbors; of his parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts, and other relatives; of his pets and toys; of natural phases and objects—day, night, summer, winter, trees, flowers, birds, brooks; of books—their pictures, and, to an extent, their characters and descriptions; and of the echoes of his soul, in which the experiences of his ancestors find reverberating voices. Of himself as an ego or identity with purposes, habits, ideals, there is very little consciousness. Occasionally, some adult—a teacher, a story-telling man or woman, a fisherman or other adventurer—breaks in upon his consciousness at its periphery, it may be reaches even the heart of him" (p. 98).

Almost equally good is the description which follows of the conventional, mechanical organization of children into schools and classes, and the outline of plans of organization more in harmony with child nature and the needs of individuality.

There are two rather unfortunate characteristics of the book which appear on almost every page. There is a certain dogmatism and spirit of finality and authority manifested in unconditioned statements, which usually contain a considerable measure of obvious truth, and are always presented interestingly, not seldom epigrammatically. The very attractiveness of this style of treatment—and it is decidedly attractive—makes it doubly dangerous. Even one of much experience must read most critically if he would avoid giving full assent to much that is only partially true. Such statements as the following may illustrate this characteristic: "The superintendent must beware of the Scylla on the rocks, which is lay domination. On the other hand, Charybdis whirls, the maelstrom of school intrigue" (p. 179). "Absolutely no subject of instruction in any course for boys and girls under eighteen or nineteen years of age should be pursued for any other reason than that it is educative" (p. 108). . . . "*In the direction of American free public schools, the common-sense of average men as board members has nearly destroyed education in many communities*" (p. 86). . . . "Every visit that he (the superintendent) makes to a schoolroom, every talk that he has with a subordinate, every address that he gives to the teachers or before the general public, every proposition that he makes to the board of education, must manifest enthusiastic commendation of *the schools as they are* lest he be suspected of intending revolution or at least such reform as will displace somebody from his or her present position. He must be an educator, or seem to be one, in the school; but he must not be one or seem to be one, at least not too earnestly, out in the world" (pp. 179, 180).

The second, and most unfortunate, characteristic of the book, especially if it is to serve, as the author recommends, chiefly students of school administration, is the spirit of antagonism which it breathes. One must needs think the superintendent of schools a modern Ishmael, his hand against every man, and every man's hand against him. Witness such passages as these: "Board

meetings, committee meetings, conferences with individual board members, and interviews with reporters keen to discover his plans and publish them abroad, are one and all so many traps for the superintendent's falling" (p. 179). . . . "Moreover, *the record itself is a bulwark of freedom* in the day of conflict with the unsupported recollections of others" (p. 146). . . . "We are all Napoleons; for each one there is a Waterloo" (p. 180).

The great lesson of the book for would-be superintendents seems to be this. The whole burden and responsibility of educational progress in a community rests on the superintendent of schools; he must bear his load forward alone; not only may he expect no aid, but all the forces of the community—school board, public, even teachers, at least passively—are pitted against him; he can maintain high ideals and work consistently and vigorously for their realization only by unremitting warfare. The culmination of his teaching, which is in the atmosphere of the book rather than in direct statements, is found in the two pathetic "open letters" of the author, published in the appendix.

The first of these letters is addressed, "To Educators Desirous of Becoming Superintendents of Schools in Large Cities." Following are a few of the questions asked in this letter of those desiring to become superintendents of large cities: "Can you rise up and go to bed, knowing that you cannot know what a day or a night may bring forth, but knowing also with certainty that soon or late the end of office cometh? Can you fear neither victory nor defeat, for victory is worse than defeat in that it makes the target ever more prominent? Can you rest merely by varying your work? For if you play golf or drive horses or read books or attend the theater or go to parties, all the world will know it. Can you be affable, yet tell nothing? A thousand or ten thousand teachers are eager to know your thoughts; and every newspaper is ready to give you a column. Can you appear progressive without being so, and equally can you be progressive without appearing so? Can you conceal the fact that you are doing an enormous amount of work? For one reason the teachers, and for another reason the board members, are timid about men who are seen, or even suspected, to work hard" (p. 203).

The second letter is addressed, "To Members of Boards of Education and to Candidates for Board Membership." The spirit and the gist of this letter are given in these passages: "What, then, is the board member to do? Either study education or follow implicitly the advice of the head of the school system. . . . 'Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers, for what communion hath light with darkness?' wrote Saint Paul. 'No man can serve two masters,' said Jesus. Either the board or the superintendent must be supreme in the schools. . . . Do not hold supervisors and teachers in contempt. Do not class them all by their least name, 'teachers.' Do not confuse political authority with personal superiority. You do not wish the new generation to be the educational product of inferiors."

The unfortunate thing about this lesson of universal and constant antagonism is this: the superintendent who accepts it, and acts accordingly, is sure to find it true. The superintendent who sets out in this spirit to determine whether he, or the board, or the public, is supreme, will very soon find out that he, at least, is not. Neither school boards nor public can be driven. The more ignorant and perverse they are, the less appreciative they seem to be of this

means of progress. School boards and public, the most intelligent as well as the most sluggish, can be taught, can be persuaded and led, albeit slowly and deviously, along the way of progress. Patience, perseverance, enthusiasm, a spirit of respectful conciliation, and the desire and expectation of co-operation, will help the superintendent and his cause over or around many an obstacle which would prove insuperable if attacked by more violent methods.

In spite of its defects, sincerely to be regretted, this book is the most readable, the most vigorous and original in style, the most thought-provoking, and, altogether, the most valuable book yet published on school administration. And it is only fair to close this review, not with adverse criticism, but with deep appreciation. Such appreciation can best be expressed by quoting, with full approval, two or three of the many suggestive, forceful, and inspiring passages: "In education, the purpose of democracy is to develop all the energies of all the people in order that, by becoming intelligent, efficient, and moral, they may all have life abundantly" (p. xvi). . . . "The true test (for grading and promoting) is not the superficial one of extent and accuracy of knowledge and of proficiency in expression, but the substantial one of energy, of motivation, of volition, of intellection, of self-control, and of self-direction. This subtler and truer test we must learn to make. . . . The determining principle becomes clear that the more we differentiate and integrate our schools and courses, and the more we distinguish, isolate, and group the different kinds of boys and girls, the more likely we are to educate. This principle cuts far below the two notions: that we should allow the boy to follow his bent, to develop himself where his power is; and the converse, that education is supplemental, makes strength out of weakness, straightens the bent, rounds out the circle, finds itself upon the truth that education has no external aim, no objective measures, no standards of authority, but is full of faith in the soul as its own mentor" (pp. 108, 109). . . . "The multi-millionaire father who educates his sons, though at great expense, does not thereby pauperize either themselves or himself. A multi-billionaire society that educates its youth thereby enriches itself. All the wealth of a nation is in its good citizens because the good citizens either add to the general wealth, or respect and protect it, or both. The costly citizens are the great criminals who live outside the law and the small criminals who are ground beneath the law. A true national education, universally enforced, would permit no criminal to develop" (pp. 129, 130).

F. E. SPAULDING

NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

The Control of Body and Mind. By FRANCES GULICK JEWETT. Boston: Ginn & Co., 1908. Pp. 267. \$0.60.

This is the fifth book in a series of textbooks on hygiene for schools, the others being *Good Health*, *Emergencies*, *Town and City*, and *The Body*. It has been felt for some years by the most thoughtful superintendents of schools and other students of education that the study of what has been called "physiology" in public schools has failed to accomplish what was expected of it; it has not given children the kind of knowledge of their own bodies which appeals to their interest, and it has not led them to take better care of their health. The